

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (currently amended) A method of preparing vanillin which comprises:

(i) carrying out a biotransformation process which comprises the biotransformation of ferulic acid in [[a]] the presence of a microorganism consisting of *Amycolatopsis* sp. IMI 390106 ~~or mutants thereof which are resistant to spectinomycin,~~ to generate a biotransformation medium which contains vanillin produced by said biotransformation process and substantially free from odoriferous by-products;

(ii) precipitating a crude vanillin product from a solution which is or is derived from said biotransformation medium; and

(iii) purifying said vanillin product by a process comprising contacting the vanillin product with a purification fluid selected from (a) a liquefied gas whose pressure exceeds its critical pressure and whose temperature is below its critical temperature; (b) a supercritical fluid; (c) a gas; to provide solid vanillin.

2. (original) A method according to claim 1 wherein said purification fluid is a liquefied gas.

3. (previously presented) A method according to claim 1 wherein said purification fluid is at a temperature below 25°.

4. (original) A method according to claim 1 wherein said purification fluid is (a) a liquefied gas or (b) a supercritical fluid.

5. (previously presented) A method according to claim 1 wherein said fluid is carbon dioxide.

6. (previously presented) A method according to claim 1 including a further step (iv) of treating said vanillin of step (iii) with a gas in a fluidized bed.

7. (previously presented) A method according to claim 1 in which the supercritical fluid and/or the gas is carbon dioxide.

8. (canceled)

9. (currently amended) A method according to claim [[8]] 1 in which the ferulic acid is derived from a natural plant source.

10. (previously presented) A method according to claim 1 in which the biotransformation medium is a culture medium.

11-14. (canceled)

15. (currently amended) A method according to claim 1, wherein said *Amycolatopsis* sp. IMI 390106 ~~or mutants thereof are~~ is capable of producing vanillin substantially free from guaiacol.

16. (currently amended) A method according to claim 1, wherein said *Amycolatopsis* sp. IMI 390106 ~~or mutants thereof are~~ is capable of producing [[a]] vanillin ~~material~~ containing not more than 100ppm of guaiacol.

17-21. (canceled)

22. (previously presented) A method according to claim 1 wherein said solid vanillin obtained at step (iii) has a vanillin content of 98% to 100%.